

Gransdens Scrapbook 1897 to 1990
Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
about
Gt & Lt Gransden, Cambridgeshire
reported in Cambridge Newspapers
summarised by
Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at bit.ly/CambsCollection

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the 1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

1903 June 19th

Not every village is favoured as is Little Gransden, the picturesque dwelling place of an agricultural community. Under the will of Miss Julia Norris a respectable proportion of the 200 inhabitants are provided for in their old age and four will, in addition to receiving a weekly stipend, be housed in ornate almshouses which will be the envy of less fortunate parishes. The trustees have caused to be erected a block of four almshouses, in them one old married couple, a widow and a widower reside, with a caretaker. The married couple receives 10s, weekly, the widow and widower 7s.6d. each while the caretaker is paid 10s per week. The remainder of the revenue is distributed among the poor who are aged or infirm and must be communicant members of the Church of England. Those who have been resident in the parish three years have the first claim

1908 10 16

Lt Gransden publican at Chequers fined – CWN 08 10 16

1910 12 02

The wife of the Master of the Cambridgeshire Foxhounds was killed in the hunting field at a meet in Croxton Park. A hard and dashing rider, she put her horse at a whitethorn fence but it failed to rise and fell heavily, breaking her neck. Death was instantaneous. The field was well together and the sad accident was witnessed by practically everyone. The body was laid reverently in a cart and taken back to Gransden Hall, the bereaved Master following in a motor car thoughtfully despatched from Croxton Hall by Mr Douglas Newton. The sad news has caused a most painful sensation in county society. She was a woman of great charm and beauty. 10 12 02k

1913 01 03

This has been one of the quietest and dullest Christmases ever known in Gt Gransden. It practically rained all the week. Two football matches were played on Christmas Day and Boxing Day against Everton and Sandy Reserves but the state of the ground made it more a matter of luck than play. The usual services were held in the parish church, which was nicely decorated. The carol singers paraded the village at midnight on Christmas Eve and again on Christmas Day. No fewer than six Canadians have returned home to spend Christmas in their native village

1913 02 21

Gransden agricultural society a/m

13 07 04

Gransden theft of horse brasses

1913 09 19

Gt Gransden show

1913 10 03

Gransden show

1913 11 21

Caxton Guardians need for housing Gamlingay, Lt Gransden

1914 06 26

A Much Esteemed Incumbent. The death of the Rev. Arthur J. Edmonds, Vicar of Great Gransden, is a matter of deep regret to his many friends in the neighbourhood. Mr. Edmonds, who was a scholar of Clare College, Cambridge, was presented to the living of Great Gransden by his college in 1884, so that he has been Vicar of that parish for 30 years. Soon

after his appointment he set himself to work to raise the necessary funds to purchase the present handsome organ, which is such a valuable addition to the church. Mr. Edmonds took much interest in various matters being especially fond of archaeology and antiquities generally, and was a member of the Cambs. and Hunts. Archaeological Society, of which he was at one time hon. secretary. -14 06 26

1914 09 18

Village enlistment – Newton, Quy, Ickleton, Gransden, Boxworth, Fen Drayton, Elsworth, Abington, Willingham, Linton, Histon, Conington

1914 11 13

Fred Christmas, Gt Gransden biog

1914 12 18

Gransden Belgians

1933 09 12

Four fire brigades fought an extensive conflagration at Great Gransden which imperilled the whole village. Cambridge firemen were returning from a blaze at Waresley Wood when they saw a glare in the sky and were on the spot within ten minutes. Mr Christmas' barn at Home Farm was well alight but a motor car was saved before the garage became burned out. 33 09 12

1938 07 14

The Bursar of Downing College complained that water supply to cottages they owned near Valley Farm, Croydon, had been affected by the new Gamlingay and Lt Gransden water scheme. It was a bored well to the greensand and always provided an adequate supply but since the last pumping operations the water had completely failed. Tenants had to fetch water from the standpipe at Toll Bar Bungalow. He asked the RDC to meet half the cost of connecting the cottage to the main 38 07 14a & b

1942 03 20

King As Darts Organiser. King Peter of Yugoslavia turned darts organiser last week, and on Saturday ran a tournament as part of the Gransden Warship Week effort. The games were played in the local schoolroom and at the close King Peter presented the prizes, thus terminating an event which must be almost unique. On Sunday the young King, who was accompanied by Queen Marie, took the salute at a church parade there

1945 05 11

Stack Fires. On Tuesday the N.F.S. were called out to deal with numerous stack fires outside Cambridge, mainly caused by VE-Day celebrations. The areas affected were Bourn, Toft, Gransden, Linton, Foxton, Wrestlingworth and Comberton. In some villages watch was kept by the N.F.S. to prevent the fires from spreading

1950 11 08

Messrs J. Carter Jonas disposed at auction the small but interesting freehold property known as the school house and the Old School, Lt Gransden. Formerly the Church School it has been disused as such for some years. There was steady competition for the property which was knocked down to Mr West for £470

1961 04 21

Gransden photo feature– 61 04 21 CIP

1962 02 10

Hayley Wood, Little Gransden, is in danger of becoming a dark, tangled wilderness of neglect, Cambridgeshire Naturalists Trust fear. It has been in existence since the Middle Ages and is a man-made modification of the original natural forest. Wood anemones, oxlips and purple orchids are amongst its plants with excellent conditions for butterflies and moths. The Trust has wanted to acquire such a wood ever since its formation in 1957 and have launched an appeal for funds. 62 02 10a

1964 06 26

Gt Gransden photo feature – 64 06 26b

1964 11 26

When the RAF handed back land at Lt Gransden which they had commissioned during the war the owner got permission to let ten houses at Primrose Hill. These will remain, tenants are assured. Mrs S. Weston says they were quite comfortable and the rent was reasonable. They may be a bit on the damp side, but they have flush toilets, unlike others in the village. Miss D.E. Parker, 74, moved in three years ago. She enjoys the community life of the site and plays the piano in the tiny mission hall. 64 11 26a, b

1972 03 10

Villagers at Great Gransden voted to put 1p on their rates for a year to raise £174 towards electrifying their church clock, which is one of the oldest working clocks in the country. Some of them gasped when they heard at the annual parish meeting that the total cost of repairing the clock and electrifying the winding mechanism would be £918. But they relaxed a little when they were told that there was a good chance that most of the money would be found by the Pilgrim Trust. The clock, which was made around 1680, has an extremely rare mechanism and its chimes play six different tunes. The clock was last repaired in 1931. Someone has had to climb the spiral staircase every day for 282 years to wind the clock. 56-year-old Mr Sonny Sherman does it at the moment, but the parochial church council doubt if they will be able to find anybody to take over the job if Mr Sherman has to give it up

1973 04 24

In the ordinary course of events Gerald Brown of Great Gransden is a farmer who goes about his work without anyone taking much notice. But in common with others he greatly cares for the centuries-old village church of St Bartholomew. So when the weather cock on top of the steeple became dangerous during the recent gales, it was a quiet farmer who volunteered to become a steeple jack to put matters right. Helped by the Vicar, Rev W. Harbury, and others he climbed the 100 twisting stone steps to the top of the tower. The party then had to haul up two ladders by rope and Gerald climbed to the top of the spire. The cock was leaning at a crazy angle. He carried out the repairs, oiled it and now hopes it will be at least another 40 years before it again needs repairing

1976 09 09

Cambridgeshire planners are prepared to pay anyone who is interested in taking one of the oldest windmills in England – the 17th century Post Mill at Great Gransden – off their hands. But the new ‘owner’ will have to be prepared to spend up to £26,000 on repairing and restoring it. The mill is one of the oldest known examples of its kind – and because of the expense of putting it right, it is rapidly becoming an embarrassment to the county council. Architectural and windmill restoration experts have estimated that up to £7,000 needs to be spent on repairs just to make the building safe. The mill was bought by the former Huntingdonshire County Council almost 20 years ago. When Cambridgeshire County Council took over three years ago the mill was closed on safety grounds.

1978 08 01

There are many sides to a new house at Great Gransden – eight in fact. Which has left villagers wondering why on earth anyone should want to pay money for an outsized

threepenny bit. Murmurs of 'Monstrosity' and 'Shouldn't be allowed' were on the lips of environmentalists as the unusual house in West Street took shape. But the owner defends it: "I think it is in keeping, although it is in a conspicuous position amongst a lot of thatched and old-made tiled houses", he said.

1980 05 29

Great Gransden may be left without petrol supplies for Esso is ending its supply contract with the only garage in the village, run by William Merrill, who is trying to organise an alternative supplier. They had been supplying the garage for more than 30 years but have decided it is no longer economic. At the moment petrol is £1.36 for four star but some of the smaller suppliers might charge 5p more. "I don't want to be charging that sort of price", Mr Merrill said. 80 05 29

1981 04 10

A young couple who bought Brookfield Cottage in Little Gransden in 1979 set about restoring it to its original state when they found a rolled-up ball of paper blocking a hole in the old plaster. It was a poem describing the story of 'young Taylor' who had been hanged for poaching. But poaching was not a hanging offence and they can find no mention of him at the Cambridge County Record Office. 81 04 10c

1982 03 18

Tests are being carried out to try and date Great Gransden windmill. In 1950 Huntingdonshire County Council spent £2,000 strengthening and propping it up with iron stays. Now it is being restored and may be opened to the public. But the machinery will not be assembled because the money allowed for the job does not include its return to working order. 82 03 18a

1988 01 13

Plough Monday celebrations were held at Balsham, Fenstanton and Elsworth where the Cromwell Molly dancers from Great Gransden led a procession of villagers to both pubs, The Poacher and the George and Dragon. They also stopped at a beamed cottage, formerly the Plough pub where, after rolling back the carpet, the dancers sang and jigged to traditional tunes wearing hobnailed boots and decorated clothes. One of the men dressed as a milkmaid – but kept his boots on. At Fenstanton the dancers followed the historical ritual of blacking their faces and donning country costumes before a torch-lit procession from the church to the Chequers, George Inn and the Tudor Hotel. 88 01 13a